

REMARKS

As a preliminary matter, Applicants thank the Examiner for the acknowledgment of allowable subject matter in claims 26-33 and 42-45.

Claims 1-3, -15, 22-25, 40-41, and 47 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wakita (U.S. 5,307,190) in view of Ogawa (U.S. 5,186,986). The allowable subject matter of claims 26, 27, and 42 have been incorporated into independent claims 1, 3, and 7 respectively, along with respective pairs of intervening claims 22 and 24, 23 and 25, and 40 and 41. Applicants submit that the outstanding rejection has thus been rendered moot by the incorporation of this allowable subject matter, and that all of these claims are in condition for allowance, which is respectfully requested.

Claims 6, 16-19, and 37-38 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wakita and Ogawa, and further in view of Yamaguchi (U.S. 6,801,286). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection for at least the reasons discussed above. All of these rejected claims depend from one of amended independent claims 1, 3, and 7, and therefore include all of the features of the respective base claim, plus additional features. Because the independent claims now include the subject matter deemed by the Examiner to be allowable, these dependent claims should therefore be allowable for the same reasons.

Claims 20-21 and 39 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wakita and Ogawa, and further in view of Lowe (U.S. 6,055,031).

Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection for the reasons discussed above. Claims 20, 21, and 39 depend from independent claims 1, 2, and 7 respectively.

Claims 4-5 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wakita and Ogawa in view of Wachi (U.S. 6,819,375). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection as well for the reasons discussed above. Claims 4 and 5 depend from independent claims 1 and 3 respectively.

For all of the foregoing reasons, Applicants submit that this Application, including claims 1-21, 28-39, 43-45 and 47, is in condition for allowance, which is respectfully requested. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney if a further interview would resolve any remaining issues related to patentability.

Respectfully submitted,

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